

Facts and Figures

Cameron Destined To be the Banner County.

Cameron county is the extreme southern county of Texas and is separated from Mexico by the Rio Grande on the south, bordering on the river for about 60 miles, and has about 100 miles of Gulf coast as its eastern boundary. It has an area of 3,308 square miles, and a population of 13,424, according to census of 1890.

Beside the Rio Grande, there are about thirty small streams in the county, including resacas, and arroyos, branches of the Rio Grande. A good quality of water can also be obtained in wells from 8 to 20 feet deep.

The upper portion of the county is densely covered with timber, consisting chiefly of hackberry, ash, elm, mesquite and ebony. The last two are the most plentiful, as well as the most useful. They are both much used for fuel, exceeding all other woods for that purpose. Both of these woods are very hard, and burn longer giving out more heat, and less smoke and ashes than any other wood used for fuel. The mesquite grows to a very large size, and is considered valuable for paving purposes. The principal streets of San Antonio are paved with it. It is also valuable for its fruit, which is a bean. It is equal to corn for fattening stock, and is greedily eaten by cattle, horses and sheep. The bark is also valuable for tanning, producing a fine quality of tannic acid. The roots of the tree also make excellent fuel. It is a very long lived tree.

In this county grasses grow all the year round, and stock find sufficient pasturage without being fed during the winter months. The principal grasses are mesquite, bunch, prairie, bermuda, etc.

The climate is semi-tropical. It is so mild that stock do not require shelter during the winter, and vegetation thrives just as well as in summer. Frost rarely ever injures vegetation in the least, and people here feast upon spring vegetables in the month of January. Cane once planted thrives for several years without replanting. In fact farmers here can work in the open air, gathering harvests, for twelve months in the year.

The soil is chiefly alluvial varying from a rich black waxy to a light sandy loam. It is the deepest and richest soil to be found.

FAIRM PRODUCTS.

Immense quantities of corn are raised here, two well ripened crops being harvested every year. Green corn is on sale for at least seven months during the year.

Cotton thrives equally as well as corn. Sea Island cotton produced here last year was sold in Liverpool at twenty-two cents per pound, while ordinary cotton brought only six cents. This soil is specially adapted to Sea Island cotton. This year over 1500 acres of it is in cultivation.

Sugar cane is one of the chief products of the county. Once planted, it grows for several years without replanting, yielding heavily each year. Last year on 350 acres no less than 750,000 pounds of sugar was produced. This sugar is pronounced by experts to be the best made in the state, and it brings 1/2 of a cent more than Louisiana sugar. All of the sugar made here finds a ready home market.

Havana tobacco is another product which experiment has proven to be well adapted to this climate and soil. The leaves of the plant grow very large and are as fine as silk. On one acre 2500 pounds can be raised in one season. Three cuttings made from one acre last season averaged 1200 pounds from first cutting, 800 from second and

500 from the third. The soil does not require any fertilizer whatever.

FRUITS.

Bananas, grapes, oranges, lemons, figs, pears, peaches, plums, citrons, Japanese plums, etc., are the principal fruits of the county. Bananas receive probably more attention than any other fruit. On 6 acres last year over 5000 bunches were produced. These find a ready market in Galveston and New Orleans at \$1 per bunch.

Grapes rank next. This climate seems peculiarly adapted to grape culture. Grapes ripen earlier here than in any other part of the state, and rival the famous El Paso or Ysleta grape in excellence. Most of the planters here make their own table wine from these grapes. With proper attention there is a fortune to be made in grape culture here.

Orange and lemon trees may be seen here in mid winter covered with ripe and green fruit, and bearing blossoms at the same time.

Peaches, plums, figs, etc., bear in great abundance. Strawberry culture has not been tried to any extent, but will without doubt do as well here as anywhere. Blackberries grow wild in the greatest abundance, ripening early in April. Water melons and musk melons also yield heavily here, ripening at least two weeks earlier than in any other part of the state.

In fact, with proper attention this section will rival Southern California in the quantity and excellence of its fruits.

VEGETABLES.

All varieties of vegetables grow here in the greatest abundance all the year round. There is no season when the city markets do not contain vegetables fresh from the gardens. As early as January people here feast on lettuce, radishes, salads, cauliflower, etc. Cabbages, peas, snapbeans, trifolles, onions, etc., all come in the greatest abundance just a little later, to be soon followed by delicious tomatoes, celery, okra, and green corn. These garden delicacies and many others beside are so plentiful that the market is overstocked with them, and they sell at extremely low prices.

TOWNS IN COUNTY, ETC.

The county seat is Brownsville, population 7000, situated on the Rio Grande, just opposite Matamoros. It is about thirty miles from the mouth of the river. It has rail road connection with Point Isabel and Brazos de Santiago on the coast, to which point the Morgan steamship company runs a steamer from New Orleans and Galveston. There is also a steamboat on the river plying between Brownsville and up river points as far as Rio Grande City. A large amount of trade comes to Brownsville from this source. There is a daily mail from Alice, on the Aransas Pass and Texas Mexican railroads, by a line of stage coaches, and a tri-weekly mail from Rio Grande City and Santa Maria. There is also a daily mail from Matamoros, Mexico.

One of Brownsville's best features is its fine school facilities. The public school building, valued at \$30,000, is one of the best equipped in the state. Tuition is free the entire session of ten scholastic months. There are also St. Joseph's college for boys, the convent school for girls, and the Presbyterian mission school, also for girls, all excellent private schools. There are three churches viz: Catholic, Episcopal and Presbyterian.

There are in the city over 60 mercantile establishments, 11 lawyers, 1 dentist, 1 wholesale liquor house, 2 ice factories, and 5 retail liquor houses.

Work has commenced on two railroads, the Portland, Gulf & Monterey and the Pan American, both projected to Brownsville, and a movement is also on foot to build a railroad from Laredo here, which promise to give ample shipping facilities, and make Brownsville a prosperous railroad town. The first two will be built on into

Mexico, and will give through connection with the large cities of the interior of Mexico.

Next in size is Point Isabel, population 600. It is the seaport of Brownsville, and also a very popular summer resort, the bathing being fine. The fish and oyster business is one of its chief sources of income.

Santa Maria, population 300, ranks next. It is a thriving little town on the Rio Grande, in the midst of a splendid farming district.

There are also several good sized settlements with postoffices at various other points in the county.

Land in the county sells cheap, both farming and pasture land, which for richness in soil cannot be surpassed. With railroads and immigration, Cameron county will be the banner county of the State. No finer opportunity for investment can be found.

Noisless Cog-Wheels.

The problem of silent machinery running appears to have been brought a step nearer solution by solution by the introduction in Austria of cog wheels made of pressed rawhide, which are to work in conjunction with wheels of cast-iron, steel and other metals. The new wheels are said to possess great strength. They do not require lubricating, and are therefore clean in operation. It is claimed that they substantially reduce the vibration of the machinery in which they are used. They can be had ready-made or in the form of raw-hide disks for shaping by the purchaser. They are supported by a wooden frame-work, and are after being cut the wheel is discovered with a shellie solution. The greatest drawback to the new wheel is its comparative expensive-ness.

Novel Form of the "Queer."

A good many people without a notion of wrongdoing would not hesitate to pass for a cent a copper coin of another country resembling a cent. They would think no more of it than of paying out a Canada piece for a dime. Yet a man was sent to the penitentiary the other day for doing that very thing. It is true that he was making a business of importing Austrian pennings from that country. When arrested he had in his possession half a bushel of such pieces several of which are required to make the equivalent of a cent, and he was sending out children to spend them. Another man was railroaded to prison for making and selling counterfeits of rare coins long out of circulation—the George Clinton cent and Maryland penny. A specimen of the former is worth \$250, only five being extant.—New York Advertiser.

An Australian inventor has just perfected a method of plowing with the help of dynamite. The explosive is used in very small quantities and there is an apparatus for touching it off underground. The result of this is to thoroughly disintegrate the soil. It is asserted that there is no possibility of a serious explosion, and that owing to the small quantity of dynamite used the cost is very little, while the resulting benefit is enormous.

Chicago Rhetoric.

Chicago Inter Ocean. The mid Nebraska ladies redeemed their states at the world's fair after the politicians and men of both states laid down and squealed like stuck pigs. Such women honor any state.

DIRECTORY

DISTRICT OFFICERS.

District Judge, John C. Russell
District Attorney, John L. Kleiber
District Clerk, Louis Kowalski
District court commences on the first Monday in the months of Feb. and September.

COUNTY OFFICERS.

County Judge, Thomas Carson
County Attorney, Agustin Celaya
County Clerk, Joseph Webb
Sheriff, E. C. Porto
Treasurer, Celedonio Garza
Assessor, George Champion
Collector, James A. Browne
Surveyor, Martin Hanson
Inspector of Hides, Casimiro Tamayo

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS.

Precinct No. 1 — Antonio Vasquez
Precinct No. 2 — Emilio Kleiber
Precinct No. 3 — Fructoso Garcia
Precinct No. 4 — Pablo Perez
County court meets for civil criminal and probate business on the first Monday in March, June, September and December.

CITY OFFICERS.

Mayor, Thomas Carson
Chief of Police, James H. Khan
Treasurer, Alfred Taornham
Secretary, M. B. Kingsbury
Attorney, Frank Feuille
Surveyor, S. W. Brooks
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